

REMARKS

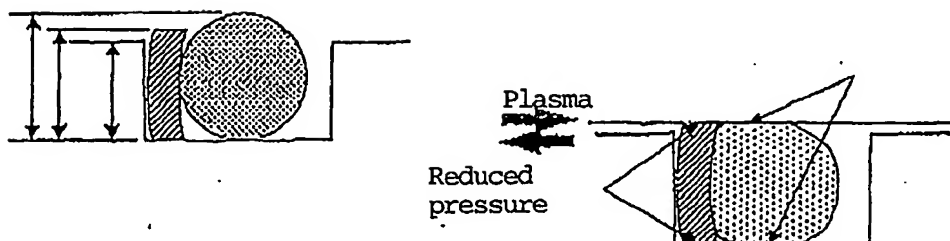
In the Office Action, claims 6 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's APA (Fig. 7, and spec. pages 1-3) in view of Rice in view of Grime (U.S. Pat. No. 3,687,465).

The Examiner has added a new reference to Grime and indicated that the subject matter of the claims is obvious.

However, as mentioned in the previous responses, the feature of the present application is the structure that the diameter of an O-ring (packing) is larger than that of a plasma seal in a direction of compression as illustrated below to provide a condition of being pinched (attached by being pinched) directly between members in a state that both receive a reaction force to thereby achieve maintenance of reduced pressure or vacuum in an apparatus by the O-ring. Protection of the packing from plasma and prevention of the packing from protruding due to reduced pressure by the plasma seal is thereby achieved.

Explanation of Figures

Packing is compressed directly between members to provide sealing to maintain reduced pressure.

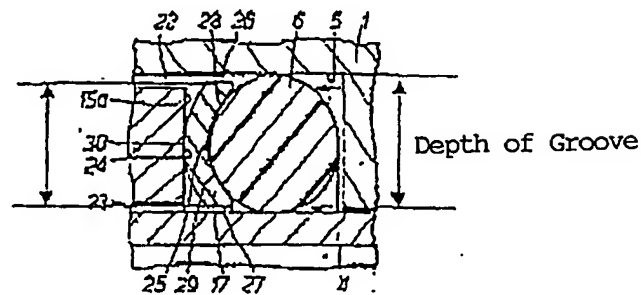


Plasma seal is pinched directly between members to protect packing from plasma and prevent packing from protruding due to reduced pressure.

On the other hand, in the case of the Grime patent, although a backup ring having a concave shape and having a height in an axial direction is lower than that of an O-ring, the height of the backup ring is made smaller than a depth of a groove so that the effect of the plasma seal in the present application is not obtainable. In other words, even if the references to Rice and Grime are combined, the above-mentioned synergistic effects, which are obtained by the structure of the present invention, that each of the O-ring and the plasma seal is attached by being pinched

in the present application, is not possible. Therefore, it is impossible to consider that the invention of the present application is obvious.

Explanation of Figure




Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application should now be in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is in order, and such favorable action and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

However, if after reviewing the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner has any questions or comments, she is cordially invited to contact the undersigned attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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